

# Syntactic change from connective to focus particles in Japanese

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Although there has been much discussion on semantic change, previous studies on Japanese have paid little attention to the change of syntax. In this presentation, I propose a path of syntactic change in Japanese through the examination of connective and focus particles such as *nara(ba)*, *naritomo* and *demo*.

*Nara(ba)* is one of the conditional forms in Modern Japanese. In Classical Japanese, however, *ba* is a conditional marker and *nara* a copula verb. *Naraba* therefore takes a predicate nominal and makes VP. We can find many instances of predicate nominals preceding *naraba* in this period (see (1)). In Middle Japanese, referential NPs and case marker-attached-NPs are used with *nara(ba)* as shown in (2) and (3). This makes it possible for us to say that *Nara(ba)* acquires the status of a topic marker in this period.

A similar change occurred in *Naritomo*. In Classical Japanese, *nari*, just like *naraba*, takes a predicate nominal as illustrated in (4). In Middle Japanese, referential NPs and case marker-attached-NPs such as (5) or (6) are in the position before *naritomo*, which, we could say, have changed into a topic marker. But *Naritomo* underwent a further change into a focus particle. It can focus V in the main clause in Pre-Modern Japanese (see (7)).

*Demo* takes a similar track with *Naritomo*.

The process of syntactic change is schematically represented as follows (X are operators that CP or TopP relate to, but semantic types of X differ in Phases 1, 2 and 3).

Phase 1 [XP [CP [VP<sub>1</sub> ...*nari*] *tomo*] [X' [VP<sub>2</sub>.....]]]

Phase 2 [XP [TopP [NP...] *naritomo*] [X' [VP<sub>2</sub>.....]]]

Phase 3 [XP [X' [FocP [VP<sub>2</sub>... V ...] *naritomo*]]]

Path verb + connectives > topic > Focus

In Phase 1, *nari* is a head of VP and *tomo* a subordinator. In Phase 2, *nari* and *tomo* merge into one word which is the head of TopP. In Phase 3, *Naritomo* as a focus marker becomes an element in the main clause and can take V or VP<sub>2</sub> as the focus (see Kuroda 1979). From the above observations, I propose that connective particles must be in the topic position during the change into focus particles.

These changes are syntactic because both the connective and focus particles are fully grammaticalized, and these are changes of syntactic features these items possess.

Syntactic changes in Japanese are classified by Kinsui 2004 into two types; 'centripetal change' and 'centrifugal change.' The former refers to changes from sentence-external to sentence-internal elements (e.g. connective to focus particles as seen above) and the latter sentence-internal to sentence-external elements (e.g. case marker to connective particles, see Ishigaki 1955). As regards the changes between focus particles and the sentence external elements, however, 'centripetal change' can be observed more frequently than 'centrifugal change'; *datte*, *gana* and *kakari-musubi* are the examples of the former among others. In order to construct a theory of syntactic change, we will have to investigate the relationships between the types of changes and the categories of the changing items.

## References

- Ishigaki, Kenji (1955) *Zhoshi no rekishitekikenkyu (Historical studies of the particles)*, Iwanami Publisher.
- Kinsui, Satoshi (2004) 'The interaction between Argument and Non-argument in the historical changes of Japanese syntax', Oxford-Kobe seminars The second Linguistics seminar interational symposium: The history and structure of Japanese, at Kobe-institute
- Kuroda, S.-Y. (1979) *Generative Grammatical Studies in the Japanese Language*, Garland Publishing, Inc.

## Examples

- (1) ware onna naraba, ... mutubiyori namasi  
I woman marry would  
'If I were a woman, I would have got married.' *Genji, Wakana*
- (2) anesama nara shinashi yanseu  
sister (= you) die would  
'You would die.' *Chikamatsu Joruri, 'Horikawanamitsudzumi'*
- (3) Haimyo de nara ... kinaga no kimi no yaitoya nadoha yoku tohuttamono zyate  
pen name as Top well known Copula  
'Kinaga no kimi no yaitoya' is well known as a pen name. *Sharebon, 'Hokkatuzyo'*
- (4) kutiwosiki sina naritomo ... kokoro mo tomari namukasi  
humble class be attracted would  
'Even if she were humble, I would be attracted to her.' *Genji, Yadorigi*
- (5) Sono katahagahi naritomo kurehi  
that wing give me  
'Give me that wing.' *Toraakira Kyogen, 'Gantsubute'*
- (6) facanai fude no ato uo nari tomo tatematcutte,  
short letter ACC send  
I just want to send a short letter. *Amakusaban Heike, Ch. 1*
- (7) naze koroshi naritomo nasarezu  
why kill do not  
'Why don't you kill me?' *Chikamatsu Joruri, 'Udzukimomiji'*

## Texts

- 11C. *Genji Monogatari* (Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshu, Shogakukan)
- 16C. *Amakusaban Heike Monogatari Taishohonmon oyobi Sosakuin* (Meijishoin)
- 17C. *Okura Toraakirabon Kyogenshu no Kenkyu* (Hyogensya)
- 18C. *Chikamatsu Jorurishu* (Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei, Iwanamishoten)  
*Sharebon Taisei 16* (Chuokoron)